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Detection of international Trade Problems in Organized Industrial Zones and Solution Proposals: The Case of Şanlıurfa (OIZ)

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Abstract

Recently, the importance of international trade activities is at a considerable level. Especially the economic competition between the countries brought by globalization has made this even more important. Organized Industrial Zones established by countries to accelerate commercial activities are also an important part of this process. Moreover, most of the companies located in Organized Industrial Zones (OIZ) are engaged in international trade activities intensively. In particular, states have begun to understand much better that they need to develop their foreign trade potential in order to achieve their growth targets in the current global century. For this reason, both companies and governments attach importance to the spread of international trade transactions of all companies, especially throughout the country. They sometimes use local government resources to support international trade companies by supporting them with incentives. However, knowing all this importance, it is inevitable for companies to encounter some problems due to the nature of trade while doing foreign trade. In this study, in order to determine the problems faced by the companies in the field of foreign trade, a questionnaire consisting of questions was applied to 44 companies among the foreign trade companies located in the Şanlıurfa organized industrial zone. By analyzing the data obtained as a result of the survey, the problems experienced by the companies in Şanlıurfa OIZ in foreign trade were tried to be determined. In addition, it was tried to learn what the biggest problem might be with the only question asked to the companies verbally. In this question, the answers given to the other questions were analyzed together and the identified problems were included in the study. According to the data obtained as a result of the analysis, the most important problems faced by the relevant companies are; It is expressed as the inability to find qualified personnel, instability in the economy, high exchange rates, and the constant increase in costs. At least, the importance of market research and the problems related to fairs were expressed.

Keywords: Organized Industrial Zones(OIZ), Şanlıurfa, International Trade, Export, Import

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2023, 12 (2), 779-795 | Araştırma Makalesi

Organize Sanayi Bölgelerindeki Dış Ticaret Sorunlarının Tespiti ve Çözüm Önerileri: Şanlıurfa (OSB) Örneği

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Öz

Son zamanlarda dış ticaret faaliyetlerinin önemi oldukça artmıştır. Özellikle küreselleşmenin getirdiği ülkeler arasındaki ekonomik rekabet bunu daha da önemli bir hale getirmiştir. Ülkelerin ticari faaliyetlerini hızlandırmak amacıyla kurdukları Organize Sanayi Bölgeleri de bu sürecin önemli bir parçasıdır. Ayrıca Organize Sanayi Bölgelerinde (OSB) yer alan firmaların birçoğu yoğun olarak dış ticaret faaliyetlerinde bulunmaktadır. Özellikle içinde bulunduğumuz küresel yüzyılda devletler büyüme hedeflerine ulaşabilmek için dış ticaret potansiyellerini geliştirmeleri gerektiğini daha iyi anlamaya başlamışlardır. Bu nedenle gerek şirketler gerekse devletler, ülke geneli tüm şirketlerin dış ticaret işlemlerinin yaygınlaşmasına önem vermektedir. Devletler bazen dış ticaret şirketlerini teşviklerle desteklemek için yerel yönetim kaynaklarını kullanırlar. Ancak tüm bu önemi bilen firmaların, dış ticaret yaparken ticaretin doğası gereği bazı sorunlarla karşılaşması kaçınılmazdır. İşte bu çalışmada, firmaların dış ticaret alanında karşılaştıkları sorunların tespiti amacıyla Şanlıurfa organize sanayi bölgesinde yer alan dış ticaret firmaları arasından 44 firmaya sorulardan oluşan anket uygulanmıştır. Anket sonucunda elde edilen veriler analiz edilerek Şanlıurfa OSB'de bulunan firmaların dış ticarete yaşadıkları sorunlar tespit edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Ayrıca firmalara sözlü olarak sorulan tek soru ile dış ticarete karşılaştıkları en büyük sorunun ne olabileceği öğrenilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bu konuda bir soru sorulmuş ve bu soruya verilen cevaplar da diğer sorulara verilen cevaplar ile birlikte analiz edilerek tespit edilen sorunlar çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Analiz sonucunda elde edilen verilere göre ilgili firmaların karşılaştığı en önemli sorunlar; Nitelikli eleman bulamama, ekonomideki istikrarsızlık, yüksek kurlar ve maliyetlerin sürekli artması olarak ifade edilmiştir. En az ifade edilen sorunlar ise; pazar araştırması zorlukları ve fuarlarla ilgili sorunlar olarak dile getirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Organize Sanayi Bölgeleri (OSB), Şanlıurfa, Dış Ticaret, İhracat, İthalat

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Introduction

Şanlıurfa is a city that has hosted many civilizations and is located in the center of the trade and culture of the region historically called Mesopotamia in Türkiye. It also contains very rich data in terms of its economic structure. In addition, Şanlıurfa has affected all the historical, social and economic events that occurred in its region. The fact that the economic structure and historical and cultural infrastructure of Şanlıurfa and Southeastern Anatolia can contribute to the economic development of the region further increases the importance of the province. In particular, further development of the city's foreign trade will further increase the contribution rate. However, while trying to develop foreign trade, it is possible to encounter some problems, as in all organized industrial zones. These problems both create an obstacle in front of more foreign trade and prevent the amount of foreign trade from reaching the desired level. This is why it is very important to identify these problems and produce solutions. The main purpose of this study is to negotiate and find solutions to Şanlıurfa's foreign trade problems, especially in terms of knowing what the state and the private sector should do. The study, which is expected to shed light on the economic life of the foreign trade item that can contribute to the economy of Şanlıurfa, which has a privileged place in the field of international trade due to its geopolitical location, also presents some academic results and discusses and evaluates the research results. This article consists of the data of the surveys conducted within the scope of the "Developing the Foreign Trade Potential of Şanlıurfa (OIZ)" project. The study was carried out between 12.06.2021 and 12.09.2022 by the article authors who are the project team in Şanlıurfa Organized Industrial Zone. In the article, the study data is presented and finally, foreign trade problems are brought to the agenda under the title of conclusions and recommendations. In addition, the article is the first empirical study on the problems related to foreign trade in the Şanlıurfa Organized Industrial Zone. With this aspect, it is an original work. Certain problems have been identified in the article. These identified issues are then listed in order of importance. The study generally consists of 3 parts. In the first part, a literature review was made. In the second part, the findings were analyzed. In the third and last part, the results are evaluated and suggestions are presented.

Literature Review

Today, with the world becoming a global village, international trade has become inevitable. Countries aim to get rich by providing foreign exchange inflow to the country by exporting. For this reason, the state provides incentives for exports, and with the effect of this, businesses that want to maximize their profits tend to export. On the other hand, imports have an important place for companies for products whose production depends on imported intermediate goods inputs. In meeting all these needs and carrying out commercial activities, companies experience some problems at the point of export and import. The studies in the literature on this subject have been examined and the results are briefly given here.

Hamil and Gregory (1997) gathered the export barriers experienced by SMEs in internationalization under four main headings. These are: psychological barriers, operational barriers, organizational barriers, and product market-oriented barriers.

Ay and Talaşlı (2004) in their study to determine the place of SMEs in exports and the problems they encounter, listed the problems faced by the companies as follows:

Problems at the national level; financial problems, lack of information, bureaucratic problems, market problems, lack of support and quota problems. Business level issues; raw material problems, information and data problems, labor problems and production problems, quality problems, standardization and price-cost relationship problems are not established correctly.

Karelakis et al. (2008) interviewed 110 companies exporting wine in Greece by survey method. As a result of the study, the companies were divided into 3 different groups and their problems were determined separately: (I) Firms with relatively low export performance encounter more problems in their export activities, these problems are divided into domestic-domestic and foreign-foreign classes. These companies face mostly domestic-domestic problems. (II) high-performing firms, which are heavily involved in exports, face more foreign-foreign problems. (III) Firms that are at a more advanced stage of the export development process, on the other hand, are in a better position than the other two groups of firms in facing and overcoming internal and external problems.

Keskin et al. (2009) listed the most common problems faced by companies in their study to determine the export problems of SMEs operating in Erzurum as follows; regulatory problems and bureaucratic obstacles, economic instability in the country, lack of information on foreign markets and financing problems.

Khattak et al. (2012) conducted an in-depth interview with 25 SMEs operating in the textile industry in their study to determine the problems faced by SMEs in Pakistan in exports, and the results they reached show that: the problems faced by companies are directed towards internal obstacles rather than external ones. Internal barriers; energy crisis, functional barriers, environmental and marketing barriers. External obstacles are; intense competition in the foreign market, documentation, quality control, procedural barriers such as late payment, unstable political situation, cultural influences and economic problems.

In their study conducted in Mersin Tarsus Organized Industrial Zone, Yaşa Özeltürkay and Çerçel (2014) applied a questionnaire to 108 companies and analyzed 49 questionnaires, which were considered suitable for evaluation. As a result of their analysis, they reached the following conclusions; Situations that arise due to companies' own inadequacies: Inability to find a suitable agency, inadequate-inexperienced employees and management, the company's reluctance to export, and the company's ignorance of foreign markets. Apart from these, some of the problems faced by companies are listed as follows: late delivery of the product to foreign markets, inability to adapt to foreign markets, weakness in competitiveness due to lack of suitable transportation opportunities, lack of capital and financial resources, imbalance in interest rates, difficulty in reaching foreign customers and bureaucratic obstacles.

Zhenhua and Qiang (2015) in their study to determine the problems related to e-export in China, the problems faced by the companies; time-consuming logistics, untraceable packages, high deterioration/loss rates, cross-border customs clearance, commodity inspection, payment, clearing reconciliation difficulties, tax reduction difficulties, financing problems.

Çütçü et al. (2017) conducted interviews with 112 SMEs in their study to determine the perceptions of SMEs in Gaziantep about the problems they encounter in the export markets and determined the perceptions of the companies about the problems they

experience in exports. The results show: In case of an increase in the export time of the companies, the confidence in the companies increases, as a result of the increase in the turnover of the companies with the experience in the export markets and the development in the production scale, the companies can better analyze the demand structure in the foreign markets, the increase in the number of employees in the company, the development in the export amount and the total turnover. There is a positive relationship between demand conditions. In addition, a negative relationship was determined between export cost perception and total turnover.

Özcan and Atalay (2017) interviewed 83 SMEs in order to identify the problems experienced by exporting SMEs manufacturing machinery and components in Konya and shared their results and solution suggestions. These results; The vast majority of companies do not participate in international fairs, some of the companies cannot benefit from government incentives, there is a shortage of qualified personnel, and there are problems with financing. The most important problems faced by businesses are political and economic instability in the surrounding countries, instability in the exchange rate, lack of qualified personnel, government policies, intense competition, high taxes and raw material costs.

Çetinkaya Bozkurt and Tunç (2018) interviewed 119 companies in their study to determine the problems experienced by SMEs in Antalya, and they identified the problems experienced by the companies as follows, in order of importance: volatility in exchange rates, instability in the country's economy, insufficient government support. and constant changes in foreign trade legislation.

Aydın and Süygün (2021) interviewed 115 SMEs exporting in Mersin in their study to determine the export problems of SMEs in Mersin. The following results were obtained by analyzing the interviews: the perception of export problems does not show a significant difference according to the number of employees, legal structure, education level of the owner of the enterprise, the field of activity and sector of the enterprise, its turnover and the ratio of exports to turnover. Problems related to product adaptation differ according to the period of export. Problems related to market information and qualified workforce do not differ according to time. Businesses that have been exporting for more than a year experience more problems in product adaptation. Problems related to qualified workforce and market knowledge differ according to the number of countries to which the enterprise exports.

Gedik and Öztürk (2021), in their study to determine the problems experienced by the companies operating in the Western Black Sea Region Forest Products Industry, interviewed 58 companies and reached the following conclusions as a result of the analysis: The biggest problem experienced by foreign trade companies is unfavorable exchange rates. The fact that the level of political relations with countries affects foreign trade. In addition, the most important problems related to costs are the problems related to taxes and incentives.

Similarly, some studies explain the reasons for trade in manufactured goods between developed countries that share very similar general economic conditions, as in the studies of Posner (1961) and Jones (1970) and Şahin (2016) and Tolstoy et al. (2022). These suggest that trade may result from technical changes and developments that affect some industries and not others; Because certain technical changes occur in a country,

"comparative cost differentials" suggest that they can stimulate trade in certain goods over the time it takes for the rest of the world to emulate a country's innovation.

Apart from these studies, when the literature is examined, Delice (2001) and Diken (1998) and Dilik and Turan (1998) examined the use of incentives in solving export problems in their studies.

Findings of the Research

Purpose of the Research

Today's businesses have started to turn to more production for international markets, not for national markets. Along with this orientation, the world market has become a single market with the rapid changes and developments in information and technologies. Moreover, it has made foreign trade more important than ever before. With this study, it is aimed to understand how foreign trade, which has gained such importance, can be used in the development of the city of Şanlıurfa and contributing to the country's economy. With this research, it is also aimed to examine the extent to which the companies operating in Şanlıurfa contribute to the Turkish economy and to identify the problems they encounter during the export process. It is a study carried out on 44 companies operating in the organized industrial zone and exporting. With the findings obtained as a result of the extensive field research with the study, it can be expressed as the special purpose of the study to offer solutions for companies to improve their exports. The reason for this study for the province of Şanlıurfa is that the province has a very strategic and socio-cultural importance. The city is also important because it is one of the busiest places in the Southeastern Anatolia region in terms of culture and population. The province, which has been of great importance for the region since ancient times, has been the center of the region in many different subjects (such as culture, history, trade) both in the past and today. In addition, it is considered to be important in terms of the young population it hosts and the future it promises. However, in addition to all these positive aspects, it is seen that some provinces such as Gaziantep, Mardin and Diyarbakır are far behind in terms of foreign trade figures. It is envisaged that this current potential will be a work in which it is hoped that it will be revealed in all aspects, especially in the foreign trade figures that will contribute more to the development of the city and the country. With this study, both the determination of the foreign trade situation of Şanlıurfa will be provided and important decisions will be taken regarding the foreign trade potential. In addition, it is aimed to create an awareness on the managers of the relevant institutions and companies. At the end of the study, it is aimed to determine the problems in the field of foreign trade and to ensure that the relevant institutions and organizations benefit from it. Moreover, it is foreseen that the problems and solution proposals related to the region will be presented as scientific publications.

Research Method, Universe and Sample

For the analysis of the hypotheses determined in the research, a face-to-face questionnaire was applied to the owners and managers of the companies. 12 people, including all researchers mentioned in the article, took part in the implementation of the questionnaires. 55 exporting companies were interviewed, 5 companies did not want to give information and When the survey was conducted, 6 company managers could not answer the survey because they were out of the city. In the field research conducted with 44 companies, questions were asked to determine the possible effect of variables such as

the age, status, number of employees of the company in exporting companies on Export Problems. The scale used was used with the approval of the consultant from the study titled “KOBİ’lerin İhracat Performanslarında Karşılaştıkları Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri: Gaziantep İli Örneği” (The Problems SMEs Encounter in their Export Performance and Solution Suggestions: The Case of Gaziantep Province) (Erkan, 2017). When the scale data were taken into consideration, the reliability and validity analyzes were accepted as they were and frequency analyzes were applied. Universe of survey is covering all of the exporting companies in Şanlıurfa Organized Industrial Zone. There are various probability sampling techniques to identify the sample capable of representing the research population. However, according to the simple random sampling technique, every element in the universe has the opportunity to be equal and independent in inclusion in the sample (Balci, 2005:95). Based on this, the sample of this study consisted of 44 companies operating and exporting in the OIZ in the province of Şanlıurfa, which was selected by simple random sampling method.

Analyzes and Findings

Analysis of the Profile of the Companies Participating in the Research

This part of the final report; It includes statistical analyzes targeting the exporting companies within the OIZ in Şanlıurfa province, which participated in the survey application. The data obtained as a result of the frequency analyzes were evaluated by showing the number (frequency) (n) and percentage (%). The results were analyzed with the JAMOVI program.

Distribution of Managers by Position, Educational Status and Age in the Firm

Table 1. Frequency Analysis of Survey Respondents by Position, Educational Status and Age in the Firm They Worked for

What is your position in the company ?	Frequency (n)	percentage of total
First Level Manager (Chief, Shift Supervisor, etc.)	9	20.9 %
Middle Level Manager (Department/Division Manager/Assistant Manager)	19	44.2%
Senior Manager (General Manager, Assistant General Manager, Business Owner/Partner)	15	34.9%
What is your education status?	Frequency(n)	percentage of total
Primary education	3	6.8%
High school	7	15.9%
Associate Degree	5	11.4%

Licence	25	56.8%
Graduate	4	9.1 %
How old are you?		
	Frequency(n)	percentage of total
20-30	14	32.6%
31-40	15	34.9%
41-50	10	23.3%
51-60	3	7.0 %
61 and Above	1	2.3 %

43 of the 44 people who were asked the survey questions answered the question of your position in the company, and their distribution is given in tables and graphics. Company managers who participated in the surveys within the scope of the study; 20.9% (n=9) First Level Managers 69 (Chief, Shift Supervisor etc.), 44.2% (n=19) Middle Level Managers (Department/Department Manager/Assistant Manager and 34.9%) u (n=15) are in the position of Top Level Manager (General Manager, Assistant General Manager) When the distribution of the respondents according to their educational status is examined, 6.8% (n=3) of the respondents are in primary education, 15.9% are in primary education. (n=7) High School, 11.4% (n=5) Associate Degree, 56.8% (n=25) Undergraduate and 9.1% (n=4) Postgraduate Education. Considering the distribution of the respondents according to their age; 32.6% (n=14) of the participants were between the ages of 20-30, 34.9% (n=15) were between the ages of 31-40, 23.3% (n=10) were 41-50 ages and 7% (n=3) are between 51-60 years old. Finally, 2.3% (n=1) are 61 years old and over.

Distribution of the Companies Participating in the Study by Sector in which they Operate

Table 2. Distribution of Companies Participating in the Study by Sector in which they Operate

In which sector does your company operate?	Frequency (n)	%
Food Products Manufacturing	3	6.8%
Textile	16	36.4%
Retail	1	2.3 %
Plastic	4	9.1 %
Chemical	2	4.5%
Agriculture/Livestock	3	6.8%
Other	15	34.1 %

Considering the distribution of the companies participating in the study according to the sector in which they operate; 6.8% (n=3) Food Products Manufacturing, 36.4% (n=16) Textile, 2.3% (n=1) Retailing, 9.1% (n=4) Plastics, 4.5% (n=2) Chemistry, 6.8% (n=3) Agriculture/Livestock and 34.1% (n=15) Other sectors.

Frequency Analysis of the Companies Participating in the Study by Place of Operation and Legal Status

Table 3. Distribution of the Firms Participating in the Study by Place of Operation and Legal Status

Where does your company operate?	Counts	percentage of total
Organized industrial Zone	44	100.0 %
What is the legal status of your company?	Counts	percentage of total
Sole proprietorship	8	18.2 %
Limited company	18	40.9%
Incorporated company	18	40.9%

Considering the distribution of the companies participating in the study according to the place of operation; 100% (n=44) of the respondents are operating in the Organized Industrial Zone. Considering the distribution of the companies participating in the study according to their Legal Status; 40.9% (n=18) are Limited Liability Companies, 18.2% (n=8) are Private Firms and 40.9% (n=18) are Joint Stock Companies.

Analysis of Firms' Average Activity Periods, Number of Employees, Average Export Times, Rates and Export Quantity

Table 4. Operating Periods, number of employees, average export periods, rates and amounts of the Companies Participating in the Research

	N	Missing	mean	SD
How many years has your company been operating?	43	1	9.98	10.5
How many people work in your company?	43	1	170	351
How Many Years Have You Been Exporting?	37	7	9.15	12.7
What is the ratio of your total turnover to your total exports?	44	0	49.4	34.2
How Much is Your Turnover in 2021?	25	19	110	212

Considering the average operating time of the enterprises participating in the research; 43 enterprises that participated in the research and answered this question have been operating for an average of 9.98 years. There are an average of 170 employees in 43 enterprises that participated in the research and answered this question. Considering the average export period of the enterprises participating in the research, 37 enterprises that answered this question have been exporting for an average of 9.15 years. When the export rate of the companies participating in the research is examined in the total production in 2021, it is seen that the average total turnover in 2021 is 49.9% according to the data obtained from the 44 companies participating in the research. Considering the average turnover of the enterprises in 2021, according to the data obtained from 25 of the 44 companies participating in the research, 25 companies achieved an average turnover of 110 million TL in 2021.

Perception of Importance of Problems Encountered in Export

Very Low: 1.00 - 1.79, **Low:** 1.80 – 2.59, **Medium:** 2.60 – 3.39 **High:** 3.40 – 4.19 **Very High:** 4.20 – 5.00

Table 5. Perception of Significance of the Financial Problems Encountered

Perception of Significance of the Financial Problems Encountered	N	Mean	SD	December
Financing	44	3.09	1.64	Middle
Scarcity of finance	44	2.95	1.61	Middle
Marketing related issues	44	2.93	1.45	Middle
Branding issue	44	3.05	1.64	Middle
Conformity problem in quality standards	44	3.07	1.72	Middle
Problems related to international promotional activities	44	2.52	1:50	Low
Bureaucratic obstacles (regulatory issues)	44	2.57	1.56	Low
Inability to compete on price	44	3.05	1.67	Middle
Inability to compete in quality	44	2.68	1.75	Middle
Problems with packaging	44	2.25	1.67	Low
Qualified personnel issue	44	3.45	1.65	High
Education problem	44	3.30	1.53	Middle
Foreign language	44	2.95	1.61	Middle
Instability in the economy	44	3.86	1.46	High
Capacity issues	44	2.59	1.70	Low
Inability to reach foreign markets	44	2.36	1.54	Low
Insufficient use of government incentives	44	2.89	1.63	Middle

Participating in the research to the problems they encounter in exports is examined, it is seen that the most important (3,86) problem belongs to the problem of "**Instability in the economy**" and the problem of "**Qualified personnel problem**" with (3,45) while the lowest ratio is (2,25). and "**Packaging-Related Problems**" belong to the financing problem. However, it has been determined that the total importance given by SMEs to the problems they encounter in exports is at a Medium level (2.91).

Perception of Significance of the Financial Problems Encountered

Table 6. Perception of Significance of the Financial Problems Encountered

	N	Mean	SD	December
Lack of own resources	44	3.25	1.70	Middle
High loan rates	44	3.68	1.76	High
Failure to collect receivables	44	2.89	1.71	Middle
The height of exchange rates	44	4.20	1.46	Very High
Constantly increasing costs	44	4.34	1.35	Very High
High tax rates	43	4.14	1.46	High
Letter of guarantee loan problem	44	3.16	1.75	Middle

When the degree of importance given by the companies participating in the research to the financing problems they encounter is examined, it is seen that the most important (4.20) belongs to the financing problem of "**High Exchange Rates**" and (4,34) to the financing problem of "**Continuous increase in costs**", while the lowest rate is (4,20) and "**Unable to collect receivables**" belong to the financing problem. On the other hand, it has been determined that the total importance given to financing problems by SMEs is at a high level (3,66).

Importance Perception of Information Sources on Foreign Markets

Table 7. Perception of Importance of Information Sources on Foreign Markets

	N	Mean	SD	December
Internet	44	3.61	1.62	High
Fairs	44	3.55	1.49	High
Domestic organizations related to foreign trade	43	2.98	1.54	Middle
Foreign organizations related to foreign trade	43	2.88	1.61	Middle
Market research done by our company	43	3.88	1.42	High
Foreign market research done by others	43	3.02	1.60	Middle

Publications published in the country for the sector	44	2.91	1.46	Middle
Publications published abroad for the sector	44	2.82	1.48	Middle

When the degree of importance given to the information sources about foreign markets by the companies participating in the research is examined, it is seen that the highest importance (3,88) belongs to the **"Market researches made by our company"** information source, followed by the internet (3,61) and fairs (3,55), while the lowest The ratio (2.63) belongs to the information source **"Publications published abroad for the sector"**. However, it has been determined that the total importance given by SMEs to information sources about foreign markets is at a medium level (3,20).

In the study, an open-ended question was asked to the company representatives after the interviews about the questionnaires were concluded. In order to include the managers' own views in the report, the following open-ended question was asked. The results are given as cloud using a program called MAXQDA This software is a software that works on qualitative and quantitative data by asking the data obtained from the researches made by interview method and focus group analyzes to be analyzed and turned into a comprehensive report. MAXQDA offers the opportunity to easily distinguish the data that will answer the research question among many interviews and data, and to examine the data comprehensively and in-depth. To be explained in more detail; The main issues or the most cited issue will appear larger than the other issues. The smallest problem will appear as the least mentioned problem.

Which Problems Can You Export More in Case of Solving? Please tell me 3 main problems?



Conclusion and Recommendations

Foreign trade has a strategic role for the economies of developing countries. Therefore, the development of foreign trade on the basis of provinces has become an important indicator for countries. The fact that developing countries such as Türkiye try to encourage foreign trade in the development of underdeveloped regions is an indicator of this importance (Çetinkaya Bozkurt and Tunç, 2018). Şanlıurfa, one of these provinces, has formed the main field of this study because it is a very important province for the Southeastern Anatolia region in terms of foreign trade potential in Türkiye. In the study, a questionnaire was applied to 44 companies operating in Şanlıurfa OIZ, the main problems related to foreign trade were identified in the analyzes carried out, and then solution suggestions were presented. The findings of the study, which investigated the problems of exporting companies injured in Şanlıurfa OIZ, are largely consistent with the literature. In addition, although it has been determined that the enterprises operating in Şanlıurfa OIZ can contribute by carrying out very important activities for the country they are interested in exporting, it is seen that they still cannot reach the desired efficiency. The most important reasons for this are the problem of not finding qualified personnel, economic instability, high loan interests, financing problems, high exchange rates, high costs. In particular, the price difference between countries can be caused by the richness or scarcity of natural resources, as well as by technological development and labor costs (Rodrik, 2000: 132). The possibilities for companies to earn high incomes in foreign markets with personal efforts or observations without market research are quite limited. For this, they need to be able to produce sufficient quality products at low cost, to use modern marketing techniques, to have sufficient capital, an effective management and organization, and qualified personnel and experience. For countries like Türkiye, while access to markets, lack of information or economic instability were more problems in the past, it has been observed that their rates have decreased in recent years. However, it is seen that problems such as the lack of qualified personnel are still experienced intensely. The determination of such problems affecting foreign trade is of vital importance for the economic development of countries and cities.

If we look at the results of the study; While the number of individual (ordinary) companies is less among the surveyed companies, it has been concluded that most of the companies are family companies and that many exporting companies make their first exports by chance or export after the importer company finds them. The general findings of the study, together with the solution suggestions, can be interpreted as follows; While 40.9% of the companies that answered the survey operate as a Limited Company, 18.2% are a Sole Proprietorship and 40.9% are a Joint Stock Company. Here, it is seen that the majority of enterprises prefer to operate as Limited Liability Companies and joint stock companies. The fact that the ratio of Joint Stock Companies, which expresses a corporate structure, is 40.9%, indicates that these companies have started to institutionalize and a common working spirit has begun to emerge. It can be said that textile products have an important share in Şanlıurfa. While 36.4% of the enterprises participating in the survey stated that they operate in the manufacture of textile products, 34.1% stated that they operate in other sectors. Therefore, a detailed feasibility study in the textile sector should be carried out to reveal the export potentials of the companies.

It has been observed that the enterprises participating in the survey have been operating for an average of 9.98 years. This period is a very important indicator of experience in

exporting companies. When the data of the questionnaires are analyzed, 20.9% of the respondents are from the lower level managers (Chief, Shift Supervisor, etc.), 44.2% are from the middle level managers (Manager, Assistant Manager), 34.9% are from the upper level executives (General Manager, Assistant General Manager). Considering the educational status of the respondents, it is seen that 6.8% have graduated from primary education, 15.9% from high school, 11.4% from associate degree, 56.8% from undergraduate and 9.1% from graduate degree.

The fact that the average number of employees of the enterprises participating in the research is around 170 people shows that they have an important share in terms of employment. It is seen that the enterprises have been exporting for an average of 9.15 years. It is seen that these enterprises make a great economic and social contribution to the economy of Şanlıurfa. Since the raw materials required for the production of the enterprises operating in Şanlıurfa are imported, the production is not as desired due to the high fluctuations in the exchange rates and it becomes difficult to make employment and export. Similarly, it has been observed that the increase in costs due to the inflation in the country in recent years has made the production of some companies difficult. Moreover, limited financial resources and imbalances in loan interest rates put companies in even more difficulty. In order to solve these financial obstacles to some extent, special support and incentives can be provided to companies in OIZs by increasing the negotiations with the Government and ministries. In short, the obstacles to accessing finance should be removed (Barut et.al. 2020).

Another point that draws attention from the opinions of the managers in the research is that the countries to which the companies export are mostly Middle East countries, and it has been observed that Şanlıurfa's exports are adversely affected due to the political problems and instability in these countries. In order to solve this problem, alternative market diversity should be created and businesses should be supported in this regard. In addition, it is necessary to conduct market research and support the export-supporting projects of universities. Considering the export figures of companies in Şanlıurfa, it is a problem that should be considered and developed that the contribution of the companies that have reached such maturity in Türkiye's exports is at such a low level.

If we look at the general result of the study; It was observed that the enterprises stated the high exchange rate and the increase in costs as the most important problems for the companies. With this in mind, businesses that are in globalized economies and exposed to currency-related crises should be trained and encouraged on futures markets to promote exports among companies. With the futures market, the exchange rate risk turns into a minimum risk, and companies can be protected from balance sheet losses arising from exchange rate uncertainty and exchange rate fluctuations with the flexible foreign exchange system (Erkan, 2017). Looking at the international studies in the literature, similarly, some scientists point out that after the crises, the export problems of the companies in the European region are similar, and that the competitiveness of the companies becomes more difficult due to the increase in market costs (Eltető, 2017).

In the solution of these problems, the export figures can be increased with the initiatives of the Ministry of Economy, Eximbank and organizations such as KOSGEB. In addition, companies in the OIZ should use e-export more intensively. The benefits of electronic commerce in terms of facilitating exports, providing superiority over competitors, helping to find importers in foreign countries, creating sales opportunities, facilitating

market research and promoting products should not be ignored. Thanks to the Internet's potential to reach distant countries, there is an opportunity to sell all over the world. This reduces international marketing costs. Finally, while eliminating the problems identified by the analyzes obtained will contribute to the economic development of Şanlıurfa, it will also contribute to the solution of Türkiye's foreign trade deficit problem.

This study shows that, as in the studies of Posner (1961) and Jones (1970) and Bilkey & Tesar (1977) and Bilkey (1978) and Tesfom and Lutz (2006) and Tolstoy et al. (2022), besides the trade in goods and goods between developed countries that share very similar general economic conditions, trade within regions may result from technical changes and developments that affect some industries and do not affect others. Suggests; Because certain technical changes occur in one region, "comparative cost differentials" may arise in the rest of the country, as well as having consequences that may promote trade in certain goods.

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Ethical Statement	<p>* This study has been prepared on the basis of the data obtained within the scope of the Şanlıurfa (OSB) Foreign Trade Potential Development Project, which we completed in 2022.</p> <p>* It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited..</p> <p>* (Harran University Rectorate, social and human sciences Ethics Committee Decision was taken with the decision dated 06.07.2023, numbered 2021/117 of the Presidency of the Publication Ethics Committee.)</p>
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Etik Beyan	<p>* Bu çalışma 2022 yılında tamamladığımız Şanlıurfa (OSB) Dış ticaret Potansiyelini geliştirme projesi kapsamında elde edilen veriler esas alınarak hazırlanmıştır.</p> <p>Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.</p> <p>*(Harran Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü, Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Etik Kurulu Başkanlığınının 06.07.2021 Tarih , 2021/117 Nolu kararı ile Etik Kurul Kararı alınmıştır.)</p>
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